

the chick on the branch and exhibited distraction behavior. The female did not appear. Neither adult nor chicks could be found in the vicinity the following day.

There are 4 references to possible rapid chick separation in Whip-poor-wills in the literature (Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull, 176, 1940; Fowle and Fowle, Can. Field-Nat. 68:37, 1954; Raynor, Bird-Banding 12:98-104, 1941; Tuttle, Bird-Lore 13:235-238, 1911), but the behavior is described nowhere in detail nor interpreted. The adaptive advantage of rapid chick separation is undoubtedly the increased probability that at least 1 of the chicks will survive nest disruption by a predator. I believe rapid chick separation is one more element of an anti-predator repertoire of adaptations in Whip-poor-wills which includes, in addition, cryptic coloration, brood site movement, and adult distraction behavior.—ERIC L. DYER, *Station 17, Vanderbilt Univ. Hospital, Nashville, TN 37232. Accepted 30 July 1976.*

An intraspecific mortal attack.—On the morning of January 6, 1976, I was looking out my window as 2 female House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) dove (hurtled) into the grass nearby. One held the other by the neck and after a few seconds the struggling victim lay still. The attacking sparrow, still on top of the nearly lifeless one, began to strike hammering blows with its bill on the head of the victim. Several sparrows flew near, and all flew off leaving the motionless body on the ground. Minutes later a House Sparrow returned, jumped on the dead sparrow and again struck it on the head several times, then flew away.

On 8 January I observed a similar incident involving female House Sparrows. The attacking sparrow held the neck of the struggling one, which eventually got loose. Both flew off, one pursuing the other.—VERA LEE GRUBBS, *3816 Elmer Lane, Shreveport, LA. 71109 Accepted 1 Mar. 1976.*

Rufous-sided Towhees mimicking Carolina Wren and Field Sparrow.—Eastern populations of the Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) do not exhibit any marked local dialects, and the high percentage of unique song patterns in the songs of a local population suggests that what a bird hears when it is developing its song does not play an important role in determining the song patterns developed (Borror, Condor 77:183-195, 1975). It is thus of considerable interest to encounter eastern towhees whose songs (or song parts) are excellent mimics of other species. This paper is a report on the songs of 2 towhees (of several hundred I have recorded), one using an introduction consisting of Carolina Wren song phrases, and the other singing Field Sparrow songs. Both birds were seen when recorded.

Mimicry of Carolina Wren.—On 27 July 1975 I recorded a towhee near Murray, Kentucky (OSU recording No. 13679, with 67 songs), some of whose songs had an introduction consisting of (or containing) from 1 to 3 song phrases of a Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). The recording contained 5 different song patterns, 4 of which are shown in Fig. 1 (*A*, *B*, *E*, *F*); 2 (*A* and *E*) were normal songs for this population (a 2-note introduction followed by a trill) but 2 of the other 3 had Carolina Wren phrases in the introduction (*B* and *F* in Fig. 1), and a 5th contained only 2 Carolina Wren phrases (of the type in *F*, without the buzzy note and final trill). Most of the songs of the *B* pattern were sung in alternation with songs of the *A* pattern, while most songs of the *F* pattern were sung consecutively, only occasionally alternating with